CLIMATE CHANGE, PEACEBUILDING AND SUSTAINING PEACE

INSTITUTIONAL LEAD

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MODERATOR

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OVERVIEW

Building peace is rarely, if ever, straightforward. Peacebuilding gets exponentially more difficult in countries affected by climate change, because the compounded consequences of climate change and violent conflict exaggerate the human costs of war long after active combat has ceased. However, the links between climate change, security and peacebuilding are neglected in discourse, research and policymaking. It is necessary to make further efforts to bring these elements together and move the discussion forward into the field of peacebuilding.

FOCUS AND OBJECTIVES

The session brought together senior peacebuilding professionals from the United Nations and African civil society to (*a*) collect experiences on the impact of climate on multilateral peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts; (*b*) discuss how climate is challenging implementation of mission mandates; and (*c*) discuss how peacebuilding missions adapt to the challenge in their everyday operations. The session's aim was to formulate lessons learned so that multilateral peacebuilding efforts can better respond to the compounding risks of conflict and climate change.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Climate change should be considered an existential risk for building and sustaining peace. The effects of climate change before, during or after a conflict have the potential to undermine the initiatives of peacebuilding missions, but they are not currently commonly recognized as issues that are crucial to address in mission mandates. For example, while the media prominently focuses on the conflict and insecurity caused by the terrorist group Boko Haram in Nigeria, conflicts over resource access between farmers and herders in the region have a higher casualty rate but less media attention. Participants have called for climate change risks to be accepted within the peacebuilding community as necessary, to be comprehensively discussed and integrated into mission work, and have highlighted the role that peacebuilding missions can play in facilitating a normative acceptance of this.

Intersecting effects of climate change and conflict can disrupt local and national dynamics and peacebuilding efforts due to mass internal displacement. A large-scale migration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into urban areas can fundamentally affect internal social, economic and political relationships on multiple levels. This can have added security implications as insurgent groups often use IDP camps as recruitment sites. It is necessary to understand local contexts and needs, and to incorporate traditional methods–where possible–surrounding resource use and management into strategic frameworks aimed at addressing climate change risks in conflict or post-conflict settings. To be appropriately actionable by peacebuilding missions, a normative discussion of the existential risks to sustainable peace posed by climate change needs to be contextually constructed from the bottom-up, integrating the perspectives of all affected stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is crucial for peacebuilding missions to recognize climate change as an existential risk to their work and the peace they aim to build. Peace missions thus need to address climate-related challenges accordingly, even if climate change is not specifically incorporated into their respective mandates.

- Discussions and expectations surrounding climate change risks and impacts need to become normative in peacebuilding work and peacebuilding missions. Peace missions and, moreover, UN country teams can then help to facilitate normative change and acceptance of climate change in their interactions with local governments.

- At the same time, existing measures towards addressing climate-related security risks that exist in many regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), need to be successfully implemented on multiple scales to support peacebuilding efforts more broadly.

Florian Krampe
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Truly a privilege to chair this important session on "Climate Change, Peacebuilding, and Sustaining Peace" at #SthlmForum

♡ 36   5:07 PM - May 16, 2019

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Screen capture taken by screenshot.guru on Mon, 27 May 2019 12:59:34 GMT.
Permalink: twitter.com/FlorianKrampe/status/1129070959590293506

RESOURCE LINKS AND DOCUMENTS

Krampe, F. and Aminga, V. M., 'The need for an African Union special envoy for climate change and security', Essay, SIPRI, Feb. 2019, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/essay/2019/need-african-union-special-envoy-climate-change-and-security>.

Eklöw, K. and Krampe, F., 'Towards climate resilient peacebuilding: Understanding the complexities', Blog, SIPRI, Oct. 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/blog/2018/towards-climate-resilient-peacebuilding-understanding-complexities>.

Krampe, F., Scassa, R. and Mitrotta, G., 'Responses to climate-related security risks: regional organizations in Asia and Africa', SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security no. 2018/2, Aug. 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2018/sipri-insights-peace-and-security/responses-climate-related-security-risks-regional-organizations-asia-and-africa>.

Krampe, F., 'Towards sustainable peace: a new research agenda for post-conflict natural resource management', Global Environmental Politics, vol. 17, no. 4 (Nov. 2017), <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/GLEP_a_00431>.